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Holiday spirit shines bright in South Haven over weekend

By James Windell

It couldn't have been a more fitting holiday kickoff than the Holiday in the Park event on Friday, November 28, 2025.

The event, organized by Visit South Haven, brought people to downtown South Haven where everybody was having fun.

By 4:00 pm, the downtown area, especially around Dyckman park was bustling with people as they milled throughout the park stopping for s'mores as the S'mores Station, ice skated in the Pavilion or greeted friends while waiting for the parade. A block away people sat around the bar at the renovated Forest House Hotel drinking winter beverages.

Shortly after 5:00 pm, the Claus and Paws Parade rolled down Phoenix Street featuring dog owners and their pets, trucks filled with people and blow-up holidays characters, and at the very end Santa Claus and Mrs. Santa. They disembarked from their Mustang at Dyckman Park where they had their photos taken with dozens of children and families.

The final event of the Holiday in the Park was the lighting of the decorated tree in front of City Hall. COSY-FM radio personality Paul Layendecker did the countdown before the tree came alive with vivid colored lights.

However, Santa wasn't finished with his weekend duties. On Sunday, November 30, he showed up at the Scott Club for Brunch with Santa where he delighted children with conversation and gifts.

Christmas photos by Tom Renner and James Windell

Snowstorm drops a foot of snow on South Haven streets

The weekend snowstorm resulted in huge piles of snow that needed to be removed from downtown South Haven streets. Photo by Tom Renner.

Storefront shuffle taking place downtown

By James Windell

Is there a better source of information about what's going on downtown in South Haven than realtor Ryan Servatius?

If there is, please let me know.

A conversation with Servatius, who is the Century 21 realtor at 253 Center Street, South Haven, helps to shed light on the many changes in store for the downtown area.

The big news is that the Golden Brown Bakery building has been sold and the building will become two businesses. One of those will be a Glik's Men's store opening in the fall of 2026. Gerald and Terri Webb, who own other businesses in town, including Beachwalk Properties at 426 Phoenix Street, will be opening a business in the former bakery side of Golden Brown Bakery – they just don't know quite yet what that business will be.

Then, there is Props, a gift shop that recently closed with the retirement of owner Beth Chuckbier after 21 years of operating at 528 Phoenix Street. Moving to fill that space will be All Good Things, a boutique located at 202 Center Street will be moving into the 528 Phoenix location.

"I just listed Kitchen Tribes, so that's going on the market," Servatius said. He added that there is already interest in this restaurant at 555 Phoenix Street. "There are some cool ideas for this property."

Servatius said that with Quilter's Haven moving from 253 Center Street to 2939 73rd Street this past summer, their former space already has a new occupant. Liz Ryan Salon & Spa was at 209 Center Street, but has recently moved into the former home of Quilter's Haven. Liz Ryan Salon & Spa is a full-service salon and day spa offering hair, nails, massage, and skincare services.

The Mitten Children's Museum moved out of the building they occupied at 246 Broadway Avenue in October, 2025. There is no word yet, Servatius said, about what will go into the Conger House, an historic structure that housed the Mitten Children's Museum since 2022.

In other happenings downtown, Venezia Pizza, at 306 Kalamazoo Street, a mainstay in downtown South Haven for nearly 30 years, was recently sold by long-time owners Rich and Judith Conway. However, it was purchased by Austin Null, a lifelong resident of South Haven, and a local chef, who says on a Facebook post that he plans to operate it year around for lunch and dinner. Null indicates they are currently closed for repairs but hope to open soon.

Families need help this holiday season

The following letters are just a few of the dozens we have received. The deadline to submit letters for help is on December 5th. You must include your name, address and a phone number to be eligible. If you need help OR are interested in donating to the Christmas Wish Program, you can do so by wilcoxnewspapers@gmail.com or giving us a call, 269-657-5080. You may also mail your letters or donations to: Wilcox Newspapers PO Box 189, Allegan, MI 49010.

Good Morning,

Let me just say, I've never reached out like this before & kind of nervous, so I apologize if I write too much. I get the Paw Paw Flashes every week & I read your little article about If Families are Struggling and are in need of any kind of help to reach out and write y'all a Letter. Ive never been a Selfish person, or greedy in any way. I've always counted My Blessings and know that sadly, there's other families struggling worse than mine. I've always believed in giving back to those who are less fortunate and helping others just for the Kindness of Your Heart, not expecting anything in return. This Year though has hit a major stress on Our Family(as it has many other families) My Fiance works full-time doing Poured Walls, even through the brutal Winter Months, rather it's rain or snow, He's out working. His Work Boots have Holes in them, along his socks, comes home Soaked achey feet, yet never complains about it and goes right back to it the next day. I give Him mad mad props because I know it's not an easy job what He does and yet still He's out there everyday to do everything He can to provide for Our Little Family. We have four Kiddos(Full House, I know lol) Our oldest she is 11 yrs. old, Our second he's about to be Double-Digits(10), Our third she just turned 6 & finally Our youngest he is 3 and He's Autistic. Due to Our youngest being Autistic, I've struggled with trying to help bring in extra income because He has Severe Meltdowns/Separation Anxiety, unless Mommy or Daddy are with Him. I've tried to sign up for Food Stamps but sadly got denied, due to the fact i didn't have "sufficient proof" that I do not receive any kind of Child Support(One of my kids isn't biologically my fiances) and I told them that I had a 'No-Contact Order' against Him for the safety of me&my child, so because of that I got denied Food Stamps. So that leaves all the pressure on my Fiance. It's definitely a struggle and BARELY getting by. We're almost always negative money even right after payday. Between Rent, Gas, Car Insurance, loans to payback, food/diapers/household essentials, it's a struggle. I don't want to sound Ungrateful because I know we still have it pretty darn good, with all that we do have(which may not be much) but still We Count Our Blessings. I just want to say Thank You for at least giving Me the time to read my long ramble on letter. I don't know if there is any extra help Y'all can send Our way, either way I appreciate y'all letting Me vent to You. Have a Blessed Holiday Season

I'm handicap. I need a handicap bar installed in my bathroom. If someone could help me, I would make a donation to the fund to help someone that needs groceries or utility bills are rent paid. I would make a contribution so if there's a Carpenter available.

Hi, Im a single mom of 8 with 4 of them still at home a girl 16, a girl 10, a girl 7 and a boy 1. The last couple of years we have been thru alot of changes, including my two middle girls grandma passing away last year and their dad got addicted to drugs (which caused us to split up) and him going to prison at the beginning of this year. We also had to move a few months ago to a new town and I also cared for their grandmother that lived with us so I was a stay at home mom their whole lives, I've had to return to work outside of the home, so the kids have been thru some major changes over the last couple of years. I do work but sometimes its a struggle just to pay the bills, put food on the table, buy necessities and make sure the kids have the things they need, that any extras isn't possible. My family would be grateful for any help this Christmas, I would love for the kids to have some gifts to open on Christmas maybe some clothes, a toy, a stocking with some candy, diapers and wipes and a Christmas dinner/ groceries anything would be greatly appreciated. Thank you from a struggling mom.

I have been debating on sending this message for a couple days. I know that there are other people out there that could use the help and my kids are on the older side, but I don't know where else to turn and don't want to feel like a complete failure as a mother. I have 2 children. My daughter just turned 13 and my son will be the big 18 on Veterans day. I have maintained a steady job all my life in the customer service industry and just loved it, but then I was forced to put my full time job on hold and drop down to part time to take care of my husband who has suffered a total of 4 strokes in the past 10 years. The last one that had completely disabled him and that has put a really hard toll on us as he was in the union doing construction and was making comfortable living money. Just really goes to show you don't ever take what you have for granted. We decided to move to Mississippi for a better life for the kids about a year ago. While it was a very good life lesson for the kids and a definite cultural change, we had to come back due to a cancer scare with me and we needed to tie up a few loose ends back here before heading back. Well long story short, we are still in Michigan living with my mother in a one bedroom apartment with no car and no job and it literally makes me cry myself to sleep every single night.

I don't want this to come off as a poor me email, but my kids are so amazing and deserve more than what they have and again, this makes me feel like the worst parent. They are very good students in school and just love helping others every chance they get. I hate how they have had to put their wants on hold as we are not able to give them what we were able to give them a couple years ago. They say it's ok and they understand but I don't think that they should have to suffer because of mine and my husband's life mistakes.

So I am asking for help. I have been trying to find a job but without a car it is becoming a hassle. I just want to give them a good christmas and be able to have them open up presents on Christmas morning and not have the reaction like last year.... "cool socks" lol

I know I should have reached out sooner, but the other day when I picked up the flashes for my mom as I always do when we go to the store, the article on the left caught my eye and made me have an intuition to message you. If you could let me know if any help is possible for my family I would really appreciate it. Like I said I don't know where else to turn and would appreciate any help that is available.

Hello, I was released from prison in February 2024 after going to prison in June 2019. I was accepted to the vocational village program which is a trades program within the MDOC located at MTO in Ionia. This is where I received my Michigan Auto Mechanics license certified through the Secretary of State. Same as any other licensed mechanic in Michigan. I was promised all these resources through the Michigan re-entry program which I have only received food stamps and medicaid which has helped me tremendously for my basic needs. I have been struggling to find employment due to transportation issues for decent work out of town and my background history has hurt my chances elsewhere. I've been trying to get my car fixed and legal so I don't have to use my moms cat and leave her stuck at home when I do find work. I have set my mind to obtaining my CDL and move to Kentucky and start fresh and secure a financially stable future for myself and my daughters future. I am determined to leave a positive legacy behind and not be known for the father who spent 4 years in prison. I am more concerned with recieving a helping hand to get my foot in the door at a potential job to help me on my road to redemption. Legal transportation is still an obstacle but if I can find someone willing to help with that aspect I can expand my driving range. I am just asking for any type of assistance to get going in a positive direction. I need this help so I can finally have stability in my life andmake sure my daughter is proud of me.

Hopefully I'm reaching out to the right person. I came across your article in the Paw Paw Flashes, and it gave me some hope finally. You see, my husband and I are in need of a refrigerator, hopefully one with a freezer on the bottom. I have painful arthritis in my shoulders so reaching up is very hard to do. We are both on SS and get $1,900 a month and after bills are paid it leaves nothing extra. Our refrigerator kinda works but the fan in the back broke down. The unit is at least 40 years old and parts are obsolete. And we cannot afford a refrigerator on our own. I have called MDHHS and all the charities and organizations and churches in the area, but no one can help me that's why I'm reaching out to you. You may be my last hope. I'm scared that it may become a fire hazard. If there is any way you can help me I would be forever grateful or if you know someone who could help please let me know. Thank you very much for all you do.

It is very hard for me to write this letter. I am not one to ask for help. I divorced my husband many years ago and always have been able to pay my bills and pay for my needs. In 2015 I was diagnosed with Stage IV Appendix Cancer. After 1 year of treatment I am thankfully cancer free! Then in 2019 a tumor was found in my brain. I lost memory and my ability to think of words to say (aphasia). I get along. Needless to say I am unable to work. I live on Social Security and SNAP benefits. Usually when I need something I can draw from my budget that I have for food. This government shutdown has drained my ability to do this. All my extra money goes towards food for me and food/litter for my pets. Oh! I also had to buy glasses in the last month. I'm in a panic because my brakes are needing replacement. My driver's side front brakes are the worst. Very noisy! I do not have the money to fix them. I have been unable to visit my grandchildren since early last Spring. I would really like to visit them during Christmas week. My daughter, son in law and grandchildren live in Fort Wayne. I don't feel safe driving down there. I do use my car to pick up groceries at Walmart. I feel that I need to save what's left of the brakes just to do that. I live in Paw Paw at Berkshire Apartments. When I was married I lived in my hometown of Lawton. At that time my husband was on the fire department. I used to support the firemen and the victims of house fires. I loved doing that! I made sure the firemen had food, coffee and water. Ok that's enough about me! I hope you can help me. Thank you for considering my request.

I am a fifty one year old widow and mother of 5 beautiful daughters . I recently have been blessed with three absolutely beautiful and amazing grandchildren. My husband and father to my daughter's suddenly and unexpectedly passed away from congestive heart failure a few years ago and my whole entire world has been completely turned upside down ever since . Our youngest daughter who was thirteen at the time of his death has depression and really bad anxiety issues which in turn causes extreme separation anxiety issues so it makes it extremely hard for me to work a full time job and pay all of the bills much less have anything left over to buy any gifts for any of my daughters or my grandchildren. I have only ever received the bare minimum from Social Security which is less than three hundred dollars a month for my daughter and that hardly makes up for the loss of his income but I am grateful for any help nonetheless.

I understand that there are a lot of people in this world that have situations way worse than mine and I am grateful for every blessing that I do have but I wish that I could afford to just go buy my daughters and grand babies a little something for Christmas and not have to worry whether or not I can pay the rent or buy the things that we need to get through the next month. I hope that everyone has a Merry Christmas and a good New Year and really cherishes the time that they have with their loved ones because it can change so fast and without any warning.

Thank you for all that you do for our community and I hope that you and your family's all have a great Christmas.

To whom it my concern,

Do to the fact I lost my snaps benefit. Do to the government shut down. My Christmas dinner does not seem possible this year. Then I saw your help letter in the Paw Paw flashes. And thought I would try. But this year is my son last Christmas at home. Because he is moving to Florida for school. And I was going to make a really nice Christmas dinner for him one last time. And if I could get help for that. I would really appreciate it. Thoughts and prayers.

I am 68 years old my husband is 67 years old. We have been married 42 years now. We have 3 kids and 6 grandchildren. I dont know where to start. I dont know what to do. I feel like giving up on life and everything every thing just keeps gitting worse. It all started last winter Jan 2024. Every thing that could break, broke. Every thing that broke wasnt cheap to fix. My husband started having health issues in 2020. He needs a shoulder replacement, a knee replacement, he has lipedema in both legs but his right leg is so big, he has a hard time walking he uses a cane and walker. He is in so much pain. His doctor is setting him an appointment with a specialist. I just had a CT scan and there is problems and my doctor is setting up for me to see 2 different specialist. We have been struggling almost 2 years. We just keep falling farther,& father behind. My husband had 2 older cars. He had for years. He planed on restoring the cars when he retired. We had to sell both just trying to pay bills and food till we would get our next social sec money deposited in our bank. We didnt get much for the cars. The cars were a 67 mustang and a 72 monte carlo. They needed so much work and money. The cars had been in the barn for many years. It tore my heart out to see the look on his face as he sold them. We have sold so many things that we had just to make it every month. We have lived here for 30 years now. We have never lived beyond our means. If things got tight we could work over time or take on a second job. There is no way we could work now. I had 3 back surgeries. The last one they put rods in my lower back and it never got better. I still have so much pain. If our health was good we both would have went back to work. I never had to have expensive material stuff. My washer,dryer,and refridgerator are over 20 years old. They were used when we bought them. Our furniture is over 35 years old. My 2004 ford taurus is broke down and marks 1995 ford ranger is dead to. Plus no money to insure them even if they worked. We are down to a 2006 mercery. Its so frighting to drive the roters and break pads are grinding. They are just about threw. We dont go to far from home. We cant afford to buy roters or even break pads. It needs spark plugs and wires. I call that car galloping gerdy. It jerks going down the road and i have no idea how long thats going to last but we been driving it along time now. I dont know how he and i are going to be able to see these specialist doctors cause i know their not in bangor. We run out of money before our checks get deposit. But the bank lets us go over a bit but its the over draft charges that are hurting us. There are some months we had to barrow money from a friend but then we have to pay it back. So we get more behind. We are using our stove and 2 small heaters to heat our home. We didnt have the money to pay off the propane company so they come out and took the tank. I wash dishes in the bath tub cause the kitchen sink pipes broke and the bathroom sink pipes are broke. Our house was built about 1900 and things are falling apart. We have put some land up for sale late aug (i think) but nothing is happening. We have a1995 dodge plow truck that we are trying to sell but some thing broke that runs the plow. Some thing to do with wire and fuses. Hes trying to figure it out but now its cold and snowing and he cant be out there walking around in snow. We got that plow truck so we didnt have to shovel snow. The truck is rusted bad but the truck runs and the plow use to work. I dont know what we are going to do if we get alot of snow if we sell the truck. We have no money now we are at our limit with the bank. We are out of food. We have 2 doggies one is out side and 1 is inside. I have 1 kitty inside and she is old but dont act like it. And some kitties out side. Most have been dumped off on us. I wish i could catch them, cause if i catch them they are going to wish they were never born. We are out of cat and dog food. I have no money for my precriptions. He has a dr appointment today at intercare in bangor and there is a nurse there that has some information that might get us some help. She is a very nice person. I hope and pray the car makes it there and back. I tried to get help from welfare office but we make a little over the poor line. I told them what we are going through but it didnt matter. I thought thats why welfare was set up is to help every one thats suffering like us. I am so tired i cant sleep all i do is cry, worried about everything,scared that we are not going to make it. Hollidays are coming up and i have given up even thinking about it. If i do i cry. It hurts him to see me so sad all the time,being so depressed.He feels like he let me down and cant get us out of this horrible situation. I try real hard to keep positive but i am falling apart.I know he is to. Its been so long and so hard for us. We pray all the time about this. Every time i walk in a store i see they raised the price on every thing. Gas goes up, our electric goes up, we are behind on the electric but its still around 400 bucks. State farm is now charging us over 200 bucks for house insurance. Use to be 100 bucks but i took our car off state farm and got the hartford insurance threw aarp. It was so much cheaper. So state farm just keeps going up. Some thing about bundling.I hope i am doing this cell phone thing right. Our son gave me his old phone cause he was tired of me being old school. But i am learning a few things.Its a older cell phone it has some problems but i am learning. My husband doesnt have one but maybe someday. I am so embarrassed and a shamed for asking for help. I am praying for help. I hope you can help.

Hello, I am writing to get help for Christmas for my 4 grandchildren. They are a boy 17, a girl 16, a girl 13, and a girl 3. I have had guardianship of them for the last 13 yrs. I am disabled and everything I get goes to help my husband keep the lights on and a roof over our heads. He doesn't make a lot and I do what I can to help him but it doesn't leave much to try to bring Christmas to our grandchildren. We give them our love year around but this year I would like to be able to put something under the tree for them. I have been able to in the past but this year has been a real struggle for us. We have been trying to keep my husbands truck running so he can work but the repairs take everything that we try to save up. Please help me put a smile on our grandchildren's faces this year. I know Christmas is a time for love and being together as a family and god knows we have the love for them but I would like to be able to give them something special this year. They are a blessing to us. We provide everything they need but this time of year I would like to give them something a little special. I don't know how many more holidays I will have with them but would like to make this one special. I lost my mother last year and Christmas wasn't a great time for us and I would like to give them a great Christmas this year. They have been so loving and caring and telling me not to worry about it, but I do. Help me please make this a great Christmas for them. Thank you.

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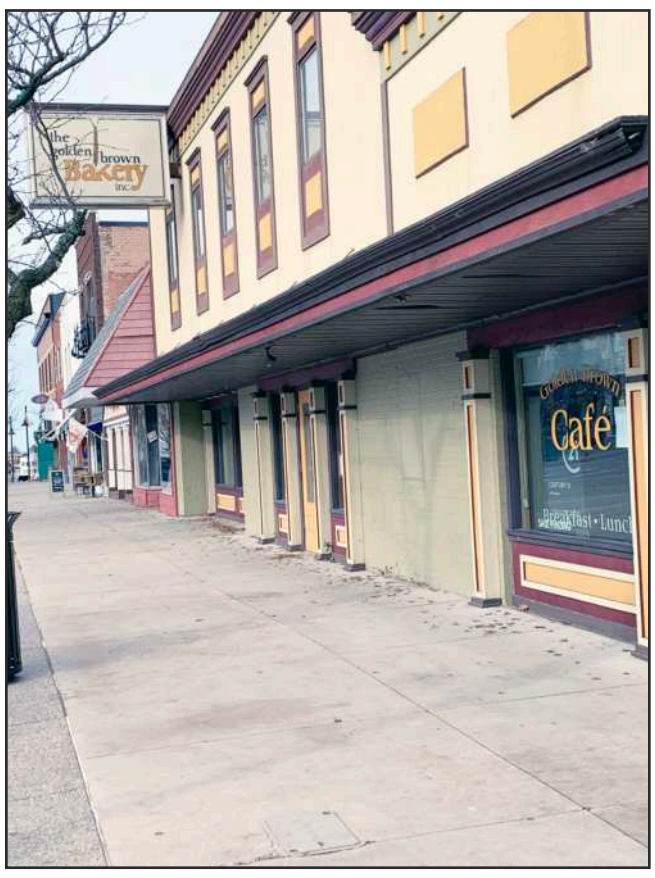
2ND FRONT PAGE

Golden Bakery building has new owner



By James Windell

Golden Brown Bakery was an institution in downtown South Haven for 86 years before it closed in December, 2024, marking the retirement of longtime owners Dave and Barrie Braschler. Since then, there has been considerable speculation as to what would replace it at 421 Phoenix Street.

That speculation ended this past week as two closings were held with the building being split and two new businesses slated to go into the former bakery shop and café. Neither will be a bakery, but only the cafeteria side of the building has a definite plan for the future.

"We're super excited to finally close," said Jeff Glik, CEO of Glik's, in a phone interview on November 25, 2025. "Glik's Men's store will join our existing sister store across the street at 420 Phoenix Street."

Glik's is one of the oldest family-owned retail clothing chains in the U.S., founded in 1897 in Granite City, Illinois. The chain, which is now based in Collinsville, Illinois, has expanded across the Midwest and now has 70 stores in 11 states. The store in South Haven opened in 2016 and has been a blend of both women and men's clothing.

"Right now, in our current store, we have men's and women's apparel," Glik said, "but we can only do half of what we want to accomplish with men's and women's clothing. With the opportunity of the Golden Brown Bakery space coming available we will be able to maximize our women's clothing as well as our men's line."

Glik said that at present there is only a limited amount of men's clothing in the store, but apparel will be expanded in the new store along with footwear being added for men and women in each store.

Given that renovations to the building will be necessary, Glik said that the store would open in October, 2026. This will be Glik's fifth men's apparel store and Jeff Glik couldn't be more pleased that it will be in South Haven. "We love the South Haven community, and I think what's exciting is that we will continue to build on the community that is there in South Haven by putting in another first-class store on Phoenix Street."

So, while one side of the former Golden Bakery will be a men's clothing shop, it is not clear what Gerald and Terri Webb will do with the bakery side.

Just a few hours after closing on the purchase, Gerald Webb, who along with his wife Terri own several businesses in the area, including Beachwalk Properties at 426 Phoenix Street, said in a phone interview that they haven't decided what they are going to do with their side of the building.

"We are exploring retail and lodging and other things, but we want what's the best scenario for everybody – for the downtown and for the community," Webb said.

Webb commented that after the holidays they would be meeting with their design and planning team to do more specific brainstorming about what kind of business they would like to develop.

"We grew up here and we want to do something that will be good for South Haven," Webb said. "We are going to develop the property and remodel it. It won't be a bakery, but it will be something that I think everybody will appreciate."

Roofer wins best prize at SH parade

By James Windell

This year, in what is promised to be an annual tradition, Visit South Haven awarded a $500 prize to the Best Entry in the Claus and Paws Holiday Parade on Friday, November 28, 2025.

Announcing the winner from the steps of the South Haven City Hall, Jennifer Sistrunk, Executive Director of Visit South Haven, said that the winner was Lakefront Roofing & Exterior.

Lakefront Roofing & Exteriors is a licensed roofing and exterior contractor with a location in South Haven. They offer a wide range of home improvement services, including roofing, siding, gutters, windows, insulation, and remodeling.

"They showed up with a whole fleet of trucks with inflatables," Sistrunk said. "It was just amazing that they brought all of their trucks."

The Claus and Paws Holiday Parade, which traveled down Phoenix Street to Dyckman Park, featured dogs and their owners in costumes along with others who joined in the parade. The parade ended with Santa Claus arriving to pose for photos with children and families in the park.

New phone scam reported by sheriff

PAW PAW - The Van Buren County Sheriff's Office is again continuing to warn residents about a phone scam where callers impersonate law enforcement officers and claim the person has outstanding arrest warrants.

Recent victims are instructed to purchase Green Dot prepaid cards and transfer money to untraceable accounts - often outside the United States

Law enforcement will never call to demand money or payment for warrants.

Anyone receiving such a call should hang up and contact their local agency using a verified phone number.

For questions or to report a scam, contact your local law enforcement agency.

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Animal Control to "Empty the Shelter" in December

Van Buren County Animal Control Shelter will partner with the Bissel Pet Foundation to help bring hope to the shelter during the holiday season. "Empty the Shelters in December will help our county find forever homes for these animals," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott. The event is going to be from Dec. 1-15 at the Hartford shelter location. Citizens will be able to adopt a dog for $40 for a dog six months or older.

Uniform Response responded to a larceny in progress in Hartford Township. "The owner of the building saw two individuals on his property in his surveillance cameras taking items. The victim was able to give a description of the truck to dispatch. A deputy in the area located the truck and made a traffic stop on it. The two individuals from Berrien County admitted to taking the items. Deputies found more items in question, and they admitted to stealing those from a nearby construction site. They were both lodged and are facing charges for the crimes," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Letters were sent out representing our office to numerous businesses and individuals in the county in reference to our Safety Pup Program. This donation goes toward our office getting materials to help us educate kids in our community on safety issues, dangerous people, dangers of violence, gun safety, as well as other issues. With the partnership we get over 7,000 pieces of educationally sound child safety materials to get to our youth. The money/checks are made out to Child Safety of America Inc. and sent to our office. If you have received one of these letters on our letter head, it is not a scam. Thank you in advance to all of those that donate to this every year, in the past, or plan to," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response responded to people cutting a walnut tree down at a public access in Columbia Township. Deputies located the suspects and arrested one on an outstanding bench warrant. "Charges will be sought once deputies hear back from the DNR confirming they want prosecution," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a domestic violence call in Pine Grove Township. After investigating the incident, the father was lodged for physically assaulting his daughters.

"Our Computer Forensic detective is handling a case in which the victim's Facebook account was hacked. The suspect took over control of it and started posting fictitious items for sale," said Sheriff Abbott. The case remains open and is currently being investigated.

"Deputies trespassed an individual from a residence in Bloomingdale Township as she is not welcome to ever come back to the residence in the future," said Sheriff Abbott.

"On behalf of the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office, we hope everyone had a safe and happy Thanksgiving holiday. I would also like to thank the community for their continued support of our office," said Sheriff Abbott.

Four SH stores offer Family Affair Shop Hop

By James Windell

Four South Haven shop owners who have family ties are having their first annual "It's a Family Affair Holiday Shop Hop" on Saturday December 6, 2025.

Katie Parrish, who owns Junebugs, a clothing and jewelry boutique, has organized the successful "Shop 'Til You Drop" shopping events in South Haven for the last several years. That, plus the fact that her family owns stores in South Haven, gave her the idea.

"My family has owned stores for over 80 years combined and three years ago I decided to add myself to the mix," Parrish says. "Since the holidays are all about family I thought what better way to celebrate than to have a holiday shop hop amongst the four of us. We each have a wide range of unique gifts that will allow shoppers to check everyone off their list."

Parrish's mother, Karen Acerra, owns the gift shop Daylily, at 515 Williams Street; her aunt, Denise Nordby, owns Rambling Rose, also a giftshop, at 411 Phoenix Street; and her uncle Larry Fragoules, owns Harbor Toy Company at 409 Phoenix Street.

"Each of us will feature a fun holiday-themed food or drink along with in store specials," Parrish says. "And if customers spend $15.00 or more at each store they can enter to win our holiday-themed gift basket with gifts from each store."

Parrish says that customers can find one-of-a-kind gifts from both fair trade companies and local ones at her Junebugs store at 515 Williams Street. "We have beautiful capiz shell chimes made in Bali along with handmade bracelets, rings, and earrings from Nicaragua, Bali, and Indonesia," she says. "We also have felted Christmas trees, warm woolen mittens, and unique Christmas ornaments all made in Michigan."

At Daylily, Parrish explains, shoppers will discover a large variety of unique gifts. "If you're looking for something for kids and grandkids," Parrish notes, "My mom has a great selection of Jellycat stuffed animals and warmies." She says that Daylily also has a large assortment of Scout jewelry and sun-catchers.

At her uncle's Harbor Toy Company, holiday shoppers will find a huge selection of DIY miniature houses and book nook kits. "These kits create the most beautiful miniature scenes will provide hours of fun," Parrish says.

And at her aunt's Rambling Rose store, customers can browse through a large selection of "Life is Good" Tees and Hoodies available in both men and women's sizes. "She has a great selection of quirky socks, dish towels, and oven mitts sure to fit that funny friend in your life," Parrish says.

"It's a Family Affair Holiday Shop Hop" will run on Saturday, December 6 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Bronson South Haven and Covert Library celebrate new story stroll

Pictured are Bronson South Haven Hospital, Bronson Wellness Center and community health team members celebrating the grand opening of the Covert Township Story Stroll on November 18, 2025.

Families in Van Buren County now have a new way to combine outdoor fun with literacy, thanks to a collaborative effort between Bronson South Haven Hospital and the Covert Branch Library. The two organizations hosted a grand opening celebration for the new Story Stroll at Covert Township Park on Tuesday, November 18.

The Story Stroll is a free, year-round activity designed especially for families with elementary-aged children. It transforms a simple walk in the park into an interactive reading experience. As families stroll along the park's path, they encounter pages of a children's book displayed at different stops, turning the walk into a playful journey of reading and discovery.

The grand opening event featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony followed by the first official stroll. The first 50 families in attendance received a complimentary copy of the featured book, courtesy of the Great Start Collaborative in Van Buren County. After exploring the Story Stroll, guests were invited to visit the Covert Branch Library for refreshments and to browse its newly expanded Spanish-language collection.

This initiative reflects a shared commitment to promoting literacy and healthy outdoor activities for local families. The Story Stroll will remain available year-round at Covert Township Park, offering an engaging way for parents and children to enjoy reading together in nature.

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Human Remains found in Otsego Township identified as missing woman

On November 13, troopers from the Michigan State Police (MSP) responded to a welfare check and missing-person complaint at a property on the 600 block of Lincoln Road — near M-89 and 106th Avenue — after a 48-year-old Allegan County woman, who had been living in a camper behind a home, had not been seen for some time.

When officers arrived and found no sign of the woman, the investigation turned into a missing-person case. During their search of the surrounding property, investigators discovered what appeared to be human remains.

"Through further investigation … they discovered some human remains near a campsite or a camper back in the area," said Detective First Lieutenant Chuck Christensen of MSP's Fifth District.

Forensic teams from MSP's Grand Rapids lab, alongside anthropologists from Western Michigan University, were called in to excavate the scene. Initial analysis indicated the remains had likely been there "a few weeks," and an autopsy was scheduled promptly to help determine identity, time of death, and possible cause of death.

On December 1, MSP publicly confirmed that the remains have been positively identified as those of the missing 48-year-old woman from Allegan County. The agency has not released her name.

"The burned remains found on Nov. 13 in Otsego Township have been positively identified as those of the missing 48-year-old Allegan County woman," MSP said in a social-media post.

According to MSP, the remains were found burned — behind a vacant home — prompting forensic investigators and anthropologists to treat this as a suspicious death and continue a full investigation.

As of now, the manner and cause of death remain undetermined, and the investigation remains active. Authorities are urging anyone with information to contact the MSP Wayland Post at 269-792-2213.

Paw Paw Community Chorus plans Christmas concert

PAW PAW - The Paw Paw Community Chorus will present the 25th annual Christmas Concert on Sunday, Dec. 7, at 4 p.m., at the Paw Paw United Methodist Church, 420 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw. The chorus, under the direction of Theresa Vaughn, will be accompanied on piano by Evonne Heystek.

The following selections will be presented by the chorus: "We Are Waiting" by Sally K. Albrecht, Charles Wesley, and Jay Althouse, "There Is Faint Music" by Nancy Buckley and Dan Forrest, "Breath of Heaven (Mary's Song) by Amy Grant and Chris Eaton/Arr. by Roger Emerson, "Hark, the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes" by Mary Lynn Lightfoot, "Bring Us Hope" by Ruth Elaine Schram, "In December" by Jay Althouse, "Sending You a Little Christmas" by Jim Brickman, Victoria Shaw and Billy Mann/Arr. by Jay Althouse, "On With the Snow" (A Medley of 'Sleigh Ride,' 'Winter Wonderland,' and 'Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!')/Arr. by Douglas E Wagner, and "Ring in the Holidays" by Greg Gilpin.

Members of the chorus include Sharilyn Angell, Jennifer Antisdale, Jami Bond, Barbara Bryant, Leslie Buhl, William Buhl, Jackie Coons, Becky Elmore, Terry Goetsch, Judy Halseth, Jil Hoekstra, Sue S. Knudstrup, Jane Makowski, Wynonia Mankowski, Joy Martin, Kathy McCloskey, Stephen McCloskey, Margaret McNeil, Jon Mills, Viva Nelson, Jan Ogden, Lenore Orozco, Loise Perkins, Cayla Perry, Pat Peters, E. Ike Porter, Joy Porter, Lois Richardson, Connie Ruch, Bruce Safbom, Leonda Kessinger Shroyer, Marcia Sikkema, Michele Sivley, Gerry Stackhouse, Marlene Stoops, Doris Stratton, Fran Van Meter, Anna Vervoort, Kathy Weisner, Grace Zimmerman, and Eleda Zygadlo.

For more information, contact Joy Martin at (231) 577-8334, Bruce Safbom at (630) 817-0100, or Theresa Vaughn at (269) 668-4631.

Holiday concert features Lisa and Diane

By James Windell

The popular musical duo Lisa and Diane will be performing a holiday concert on Friday, December 5, 2025 at 6:00 pm.

Known in the South Haven area, but also around the world for their beautiful harmonies and fun, high energy performances, vocalist Diane Van Deurzen and pianist and vocalist Lisa Otey will be bringing their jazzy, bluesy holiday music to the First Congregational UCC in South Haven.

Prior to coming to this area a few years ago, Diane and Lisa lived in Tucson, Arizona for many years and received numerous awards for their music, including being inducted into the Arizona Blues Hall of Fame.

"When we lived in Tucson, we had a tradition of presenting a holiday concert every year," Diane says. "We are so happy to continue that tradition in South Haven."

Diane says that their concert will be a joyful celebration of the season and you can expect to hear classics like "Winter Wonderland," upbeat tunes like "Swingin' Them Jingle Bells," Lisa's original swing number "Meet Me Under the Mistletoe" from their holiday CD, and "smashups" like Diane's moving arrangement of "Silent Night" with Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah."

"We always look for ways to include everyone in the audience," Diane says. "They will be invited to play a little percussion, including jingle bells, and, of course, sing along."

Diane and Lisa have performed at jazz and blues festivals, clubs and concert halls from Paris to Sydney. Whenever and wherever they perform together, people comment on their easy rapport and emotional connection. Lisa's piano and vocals are hot and steamy, while Diane's can be sweet and hot. Since coming to this area, Lisa and Diane have quickly made a name for themselves by singing and playing at vineyards, breweries and special events around West Michigan.

Diane says it is significant that the concert is on December 5. "December 5 is the night Sinterklaas comes to put candies in the wooden shoes of good little Dutch children," she says. "I grew up with that tradition in Wisconsin. Most years, my wooden shoes were filled with candy. And there was only year that I got coal! I've asked Sinterklaas to make a special trip to South Haven to leave candy for everyone who comes to the concert. Wooden shoes are not required."

The holiday concert is on Friday, December 5, at 6:00 pm at First Congregational UCC, 651 Phoenix St., South Haven. Tickets are $20 at the door and children 12 and under can enter free of charge.

For more concert information, call (269) 637-3804 (opt. 5). To find out more about their music, you can find them online at www.dianeandlisa.com

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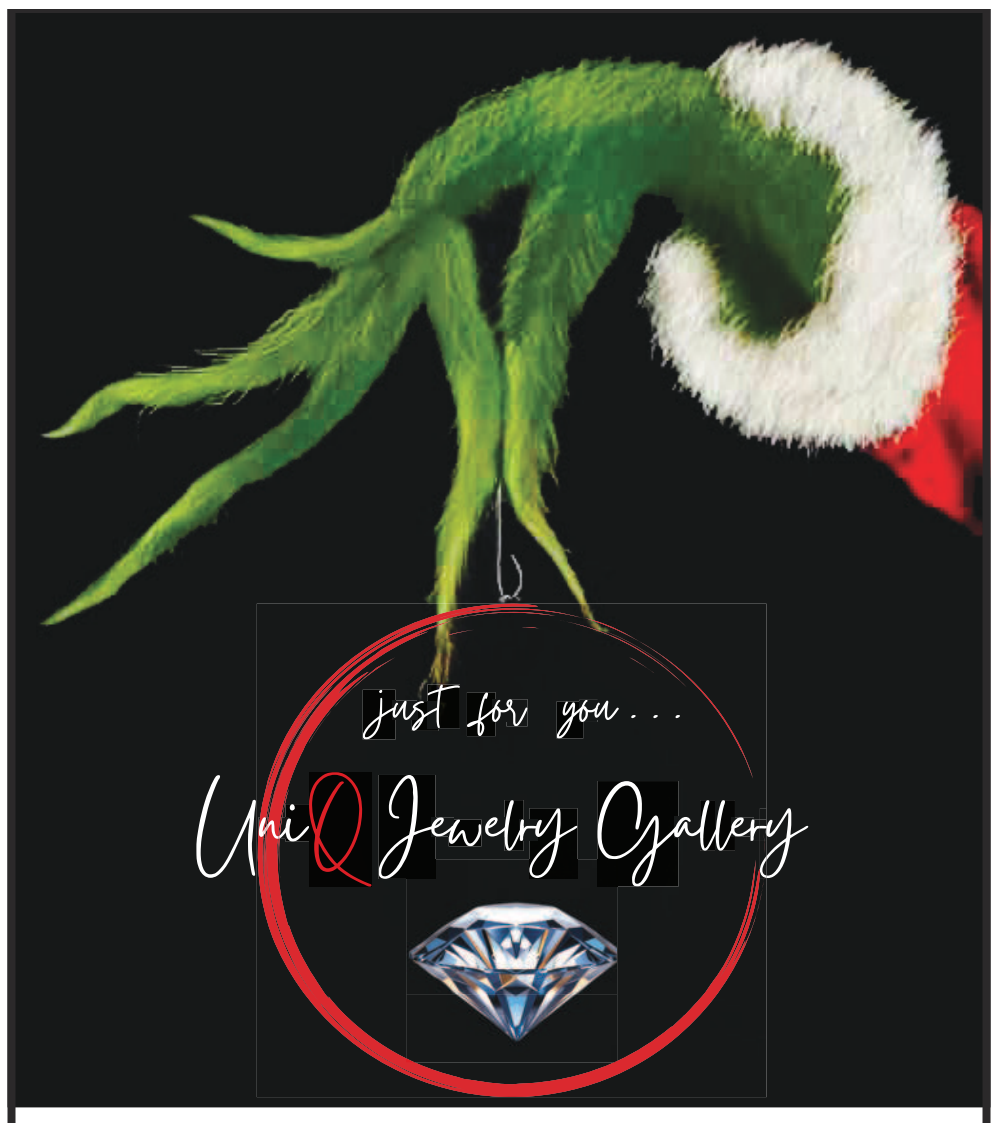

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VIEWPOINT

Why America Needs Controlled Borders, Not Open Ones

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

The debate over America's border policies often gets tangled in national politics, angry cable-news segments, and social-media shouting. But beneath all that noise, the issue comes down to something our readers in Allegan, Clare, Van Buren, St. Joseph, Calhoun, Jackson and the communities we cover understand very clearly: a nation—just like a town, a home, or a business—cannot function without clear rules, enforced boundaries, and a plan for who enters.

Yet some political voices are pushing for open borders, or policies that come dangerously close to them. They argue that the United States should allow anyone from anywhere to come in freely, without limits. It may sound compassionate. It may make for a tidy slogan on a protest sign. But it is not practical, sustainable, or fair to the communities that end up bearing the burden.

Let's be honest: even today, with borders now controlled, many towns and cities are overwhelmed because of the migrants allowed in during the previous administration. Major urban areas—New York, Chicago, Denver—are already scrambling to find housing, schooling, and medical care for the millions of migrants that passed through our borders. These aren't wealthy municipalities with unlimited budgets; their cities now cutting other services to make room for immigration-related needs.

If large cities with billions in resources are struggling, imagine the strain on smaller Midwestern counties like ours. We operate on thin margins. Local schools depend on millages. Hospitals in rural Michigan aren't exactly swimming in extra beds, staff, or dollars. When the federal government fails to manage the border, it's towns like ours that end up dealing with the consequences—without the funding to do so.

Controlled borders are not about shutting the door. They are about managing the flow so communities, charities, schools, and law enforcement can keep up. It's about making sure that immigration works for everyone, not just for those who cross the border but for the taxpayers asked to support them.

There's also a basic issue of fairness. Millions of people immigrate legally, filling out paperwork, waiting years for approval, and going through background checks. That process reflects America's values: order, opportunity, fairness, and respect for the law. It is a long, arduous process, but one that has worked for decades. But when illegal entry becomes commonplace—or worse, when it becomes tolerated—those who follow the rules are treated as fools for bothering.

Then there's the impact on wages and local job markets. We're often told immigrants do jobs "Americans won't do." The truth is more complicated. Americans will do those jobs when employers offer fair wages. But if industries can rely on an endless stream of low-wage labor crossing the border illegally, the pressure to raise wages evaporates. That hurts every working family, immigrant and American alike.

Controlled borders protect workers by keeping wages honest.

Most importantly, border security is a matter of national safety. We check IDs to enter a high school gymnasium. We require driver's licenses at traffic stops. We enforce rules at courthouses, airports, and even small-town festivals. Yet some believe the border of the United States—the very line that separates us from the rest of the world—should be the one place where rules don't apply.

That defies common sense.

America can remain a generous, welcoming country. We always have been. But generosity without limits isn't generosity at all—it becomes chaos. One only has to look across the Atlantic to Sweden, Belgium or other EU nations that are rapidly approaching chaos because of their border policies. A stable nation can accept newcomers only at a pace it can absorb, and only when it knows who is entering and why.

Controlled borders are not anti-immigrant. They are pro-stability, pro-community, and pro-America. They protect our towns, our budgets, our workers, and our national integrity. If we want immigration to succeed, if we want newcomers to thrive—we must manage it, not surrender to it.

The path forward is simple: secure the borders, enforce the rules, and welcome people at a sustainable, lawful pace. That's not cruel. That's responsible. And it's what this country needs right now.

How We Won $1,000 – or Not

By James Windell

I don't know how you handle this at your house, but here's the way it goes at ours.

When the mail is delivered, I bring it in, and sort through it. The bills go in one stack and the advertising fliers go directly in the recycling bin. Unless it's a coupon for pizza. We keep those.

A couple of weeks ago, as I was looking through the mail, I saw a large piece of advertising on heavier than usual card stock that proclaimed: Play Lady Luck now! Win $100,000.

It came from an auto dealership in Benton Harbor. As I quickly glanced at the flier, I noted that I could see immediately if I was a winner by pulling six tabs. If they matched across, I could win anywhere from $1,000 to $100,000.

It couldn't hurt to pull those tabs before tossing it. So, I pulled all six tabs.

I should tell you that I never win anything. I've never won playing Meg Millions or Powerball. The most I ever won in an instant lotto was two dollars. My luck at casino's is terrible. I always walk out thinking I could done something better with the spent I lost. Like investing in crypto tokens or dropping dollar bills down the storm drain.

Although, I just remembered I did win something several years ago. We were on a whale watching boat out of Gloucester, Massachusetts. It was a windy day and after an hour of very choppy water and being hurled from one side of the boat to the other, I was feeling nauseous. Finding a comfortable bench below deck, I curled up, put my jacket over my head and took a nap. When I woke up, I was told that I had won a free ticket to go on another whale watching boat ride. Lucky me!

Anyway, after pulling the tabs, I was surprised to find that we had matching hearts across one line. It said we were a $1,000 winner. Right!

I knew it was a gimmick to get us to go onto the car dealership and look at their new Chryslers, Dodges and Jeep Rams. But, instead of tossing it, I left it on the countertop in the kitchen so Jane could see it when she came home.

Later that day, as she was going through the mail that pertained to her, she took a look at the flier and asked: "Is this a scam?"

"Probably," I replied. "Throw it out."

Jane kept studying it looking to see what the fine print said. "If you match across, you are a winner" she read out loud. "We've matched across."

"It's got to be a scam," she declared. But we left it on the countertop.

The next day she was talking to a friend who lives in Bangor. Jane told her we got this flier in the mail that showed we had won $1,000.

"We got one, too," her friend said. "We won $1,000, too. We had six matching hearts."

"That's too much of a coincident," Jane told her.

But the flier remained on the countertop.

Finally, Jane said she was going to call the auto dealership and ask them if it was legitimate.

"Yes. It is legitimate," a friendly female voice said on the other end of the line.

"We don't want a new car," Jane said, "but if we won, we want the money."

"That's fine," the friendly voice. "Just come in and collect your prize."

We decided that since it is only 20 minutes to go to Benton Harbor, we would go and see if they would actually hand us a check for $1,000. On the way there, Jane said that $1,000 would help pay for the new sewing machine she just bought. "And we'd have some left over," she added.

After a few minutes she said, "They can't lie in an ad, can they? I looked it up. If they promise something they have to honor it."

"Sure," I replied.

When we got there, a man met us in the parking lot and directed us to come in and collect our winnings. "We don't want a new car," Jane said.

"Just come in and we'll get you registered," the helpful man said.

Once we got in the showroom, he passed us off to a lady. Her name was Miss Charlotte. We handed her the flier showing we were winners of $1,000. "Let's get you registered," she said.

We all sat down at a table.

Jane said: "We don't need a car; we just want the prize."

"I have to go over this part with you," said Miss Charlotte. "If you accept this today, we can apply $2,000 towards a car, with no money out of pocket, a low APR, no payments for 90 days, and monthly payments starting at $159."

"No," Jane said in her forceful voice. "We're not interested in your vehicle offers; we only wish to claim the prize."

Miss Charlotte pointed to very small print on the flier. "The process involves checking your confirmation code and drawing numbers to determine the prize," she said.

She led us to another part of the showroom where there was a box. She directed Jane to reach in the box and pull out an envelope. She did that.

"Open it up," Miss Charlotte said.

Jane did that and pulled out a crisp five-dollar bill.

"That's your winning," Miss Charlotte said.

Jane and I looked at each other and shrugged. "This won't pay for our lunch," Jane said.

Miss Charlotte wasn't interested in us anymore and walked away to greet someone else coming in to claim their prize.

We walked out holding our brand new $5 bill.

"Did this pay for our gas to get here?" Jane asked.

"Just barely," I replied. "Remind me to throw out the next flier we get that says we won a prize!"

On the way home, we agreed that we were gullible, that we would never return to that dealership, and the five dollars we won wouldn't come close to paying for her new sewing machine.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Michigan with love

By State Representative Pauline Wendzel

There's a special kind of magic that settles over Michigan when the calendar turns to December. It isn't just the snow or the lights; it's a feeling. It's the season of perpetual hope, where we look past the cold and focus on the warmth of our community.

This past Monday, amidst the scent of fresh pine and the crisp winter air, I saw that spirit come alive at Wahmhoff Farms. I joined a dedicated group of volunteers with a mission that was simple in its execution but profound in its joy: we were there to load trailers with hundreds of Michigan-grown Christmas trees.

These trees aren't just agriculture. They're gifts of gratitude headed to Hurlburt Field in Florida and Fort Rucker in Alabama. They're going to families who, by nature of their service, can't be home for the holidays.

We often forget what a Christmas tree represents. It is the anchor of the Christmas home. It's where the memories are made, where the lights sparkle, and where the family gathers. For a service member stationed halfway across the country, a fresh tree is a reminder that while they're standing post, we're thinking of them. It brings the crisp smell of a Michigan winter to a base in the south, a signal that says: You are loved, and you are remembered.

This effort is part of the Trees for Troops program, but the heartbeat of it here is Wahmhoff Farms. They're incredible members of our community who understand that the true spirit of Christmas isn't found in what you get, but in what you give. Year after year, the Wahmhoff family coordinates this massive undertaking, donating the fruits of their labor to ensure our troops have a piece of a real American Christmas.

Standing there as the trailers filled up, it hit everyone there that we weren't just shipping trees; we were shipping a piece of home. To the service members at Hurlburt Field and Fort Rucker: We hope these trees bring you joy. And to Wahmhoff Farms: Thank you for cultivating the very best of the Christmas spirit.

From Michigan, with love. Merry Christmas

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Former Mattawan player shines at Ferris

Jalen Jones (42) is a former Mattawan football standout who continues to shine as a senior defensive back for Ferris State University.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Jalen Jones is a former Mattawan football standout who continues to shine as a senior defensive back for Ferris State University.

Jones had an interception for a touchdown with the Bulldogs against Northwood University in the first round of the Division I playoffs on Nov. 15.

He also has an interception against Ashland in a win on Nov. 22. Ferris has won three of the last four NCAA Division II national titles and plays Minnesota State at home on Saturday in a national quarterfinal.

Jones entered the season as a starter but missed several games to an injury before returning recently.

"It had been awhile since he has played," Ferris coach Tony Annese said. "He's such a key part to our defense. It's such a relief to have him. It's really going to help us having him back because he's a super player."

Lawrence basketball bids for fun season

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWRENCE — Noah Wiswary will be coaching a Lawrence boys basketball team which he is confident can have a lot of success this season.

"Last year we did not win many games on paper. However we were able to begin the process of changing the culture. We were able to win a few games down the stretch and in the tournament which gave us a positive step into this year," he said. "We lost some key guys last year with Jose Hernandez, Dillon Simpson, David Miller, and Aiden Lowe. I credit those guys a lot for starting the process of changing a culture. They accepted that there needed to be change and worked really hard to set up future success for the classes that will follow them..

"We return two starters from last year in Alex Gardner and Gabe Doorlag. We will look to them to fill a big role this year. We also have a promising group of young players moving up who have really impressed us. They've put in time in the offseason, they come to practice ready to learn, and they've shown a level of coachability that makes a huge difference in our program."

Overall, what Wiswary expects from his players is to operate as one unit.

"That means trusting each other, playing for each other, and putting the team above individual goals," he said. "If we commit to being connected—on the court, in practice, and throughout the season—we'll give ourselves the chance to compete every single night. Our success will come from our togetherness, our effort, and our willingness to play as a true team.

"I expect us to get better every day. We strive to be process-oriented, and I firmly believe that if we commit to doing things the right way, the results will take care of themselves. I think our strengths are the camaraderie, effort, and heart of these kids. The X's and O's don't matter if you don't have a team that wants to work hard every day—and I believe that's exactly what we have. I also think we can be extremely balanced."

Wiswary added: "We need to work on continuing to get better. We do not want this to be a roller coaster type season we want to be a team that got better every game no matter what the scoreboard says.

"Our conference is very strong. I would assume Centreville, Cassok polis, Bloomingdale, Hartford, and Comstock will all be up there as favorites. I think we can compete with anybody as long as we play hard, smart, and together. If we can do those three things all season it should be a fun year."

Bloomingdale's basketball eyes continued improvement

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINGDALE — Mark Parsley is Bloomingdale's boys basketball coach and is look for his program to continue to improve.

"The 24-25 season was a turnaround season for the program coming off a 2-21 season the year prior. We ended at 13-12 and won the first district championship in over a decade," Parsley said. "The highlight of the season was the district championship game in Saugatuck with the entire community of Bloomingdale packing the gym in support of the team. We graduated two key seniors that were instrumental in helping to turn the program around with their leadership, Isaac Goudzwaard and Rowan Albrecht. Although they were the biggest contributors on the scorecard, their roles as team captains and the emotional leaders helped us meet our goals for the season.

"We bring back two all-conference players in Javon Pittsley (senior, guard) and Aiden Byers (junior, forward). These two will look to improve on last season. Patrick Robinson (senior, forward), Bradyn Bard (senior, guard), and Chayse Ciborski (senior, forward) will all have major roles on the team. Collin Lewis (sophomore, forward) who excelled in last years district tournament will see a lot of court time on varsity this season.

"We expect to be competitive in our conference and are looking to be right there at the end for a conference championship. Another goal is to win back-to-back district championships and to be competitive in our regional.

The team will have the most depth that we have had in the past few years which will allow us to do some different things on defense which we are excited about. We have a lot of athletic guys that can run the floor and score the basketball. As we continue to be more successful, we will continue to improve on the little things that winning teams need to do. Attention to detail is something that we are working on every day."

Parsley hopes his team can be contenders.

"The conference will continue to be strong even with the departure of some high caliber players. Centreville, Cassopolis, and Comstock will be the league favorites, and we would put ourselves in the mix in that top 3-4 teams in the conference," he said.

Bangor cheer coach continues to build

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Bangor's cheer coach Brittany Marbut continues to build her program.

"This year will be our first varsity competitive cheer season since 2022," Marbut said. "Prior to that Bangor hadn't had competitive cheer since they won districts in 2014 and 2015. We look forward to rebuilding our program at the varsity level. I'd previously spent the last three years building our Middle School program.

"We have a large group of new athletes joining our program this year, with only three girls returning who've been on the mat before including Emmah Farley-Glaze (freshman), Gracie Mortenson (freshman), and Oriana Wellington (sophomore). We have one senior Angelina Mejia Merino joining us this year, along with many freshmen and aophomores. It will be a great learning experience for the girls joining the program.

"I am also excited to have Olivia Dechant assisting me. She is a former Coloma athlete that was on their 2025 State Finalist team, earning both district and conference championships. We have a young team, so I look forward to having them the next couple years and seeing them work together. My girls work very hard to achieve their goals, they are very determined and have a good work ethic."

Marbut said her team will focus on "working on our stunting and tumbling. Since we have such a new team many of our competitive athletes have not done any stunting or tumbling before starting with us."

The SAC conference includes 2025 State Finalists Coloma.

Freshmen are: Emmah Farley Glaze,, Gracie Mortenson, Livi Heimsath and Chloe Celaya. Sophomores are Oriana Wellington, Kazimera Davis,, Mallory Honeycutt, Rylee Phillips, Jadalyn Bowen, Kelsee Roberts and Destiny McNealy. The lone junior is Emmaleigh Kish. The only sophomore is Angelina Mejia Merino.

Gobles girl wrestlers ready for another season

By John Raffel
Corresponent

GOBLES — Dan Morris is Gobles girls wrestling coach and is eager to see what his team can accomplish in the Southern Athletic Conference (SAC) for its second season of varsity action.

"2024 was full of high points for the inaugural Gobles Tiger girls wrestling team," he said. "Three of five wrestlers finished above .500, we brought home 27 medals including four gold, six silver, and seven bronze. All of our girls placed at the SAC tournament with three runnerups, and two third place finishes. In the first ever girls only districts for Michigan, we had two wrestlers advance to regionals.

"Returning to the mat this year will be junior Freedom Morris, sophomore Alysa Sparks, and sophomore Yethzi Garcia. As our team captains, Freedom and Alysa look to lead the team to be the best in the practice room, on the mat and in the hallways of Gobles High School. As a growing team, we expect numbers to be around 10 wrestlers with a lot of young talent."

Morris said Freedom Morris took a huge leap in the right direction last season.

"Her mat awareness, self-confidence and pure grit helped her excel far above what even she thought was possible," Morris said. "She placed in every tournament except two, finished the year with seven medals including two golds and was named the first girl "Hammer of the Week" in week 5. She improved every one of her stats tremendously from the previous season. She also won awards for perfect attendance, most takedowns, and most improved wrestler. I look forward to seeing what the next two years will bring for Freedom and to watch her grow as a wrestler and a team leader.

"Alyssa Sparks known affectionately as Sparky was a force to be reckoned with in her first year as a varsity wrestler. She showed that with grit and determination, anything is possible. She showed no fear against some of the toughest opponents in her weight class. Alyssa finished her freshmen season with seven medals including two golds. She also earned awards for perfect attendance and hammer of the year. As one of our first girl regional qualifiers, Alyssa will only continue to grow as a wrestler, and we can't wait to grow with her."

Morris said Yethzi Garcia returns to the mat this season after a short season last year.

"She worked hard over the summer at camps and summer practices and is one of the few wrestlers that made every event. We look forward to watching her grow as a wrestler and as an individual," Morris said. "The Tigers face their first round of competition on Dec. 4 at Lakewood High School for a jamboree event and then at Coloma High School on Dec. 6 for an individual's tournament. Wish them luck as they start the season eager to impress and make history at Gobles."

Bloomingdale wrestlers have high expectations

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINGDALE — Bloomingdale High School varsity wrestling coach Scott Pfeiffer has his team set for what he is confident will be an extremely successful 2025-26 wrestling season.

Last season, Rowan Hegelmann was All-State for the second straight year, taking fourth place.

Hegelmann, Molly Menzel, Troy Zuck and Zavier Gonzalez "all helped shape our program by setting a high standard of dedication and effort," Pfeiffer said.

Key athletes include Evelyn Hegelmann (Jr.), Callie Sivak (Jr.) and Joseph Rodriguez De La Cruz (Jr.).

"These athletes will be expected to show leadership on and off the mat," Pfeiffer said. "We are going through a rebuild after losing a solid core of seniors. We expect the kids to train and compete hard and lay a foundation for future success. We have three returning wrestlers who will set the tone for effort and intensity in our wrestling room.

"We have a few first-year wrestlers so we will be working on the fundamentals and helping these kids develop a growth and improvement mindset."

Pfeiffer said the Southwest 10 is a very tough conference for wrestling.

"Look for Decatur and White Pigeon to contend for the title. We will compete hard in every match," Pfeiffer said.

South Haven has new bowling coach

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — South Haven High School Varsity bowling coach Gary Guthrie is ready to begin his first season in the SAC-Lakeshore Division

"It would seem than the team was quite younger with no seniors, but we did have two juniors last year finish in the top 10 in conference, those two being Jadon Schneider and Brody Strebeck," Guthrie said. "We were not in contention to win the conference. I don't have a lot of info since this is my first season.

"To my knowledge, we did not lose anyone last year that was a major contributor... but again this is my first year and I don't have a lot of info on last year's team."

Jadon Schneider(senior) and Brody Strebeck(senior) will be returning this season to lead the charge.

"We also hopefully have the return of Ryan O'dell (junior) who was unable to compete last year," Guthrie said. "He brings a lot of bowling experience and skill to the table. Another junior, Trey Daggett, is expected to bring much improved skills to the table.

"There are also a couple of returning sophomores that seem to have made some huge improvements from last year, hoping that Noah Maly and Carson Brown become important contributors to the team,: Guthrie said. "We have also gained some new bowlers from other sports... Rylan Jenks (junior), Jacob Bosma (senior), and Rowan Fonseca (junior) are all football players who decided to give bowling a try.

"I'm expecting them to bring some energy, excitement, and competitiveness to the team that maybe has not been there in the past. Looking forward to a unique blend of characters on this team and how it will all mesh together."

Expectations are high.

"I am expecting us to be in direct competition to win the conference this season. Maybe even be the team to beat. The plan is to win the conference and do it while having fun," Guthrie said. " I feel like senior leadership and so far a willingness to learn, practice, be coachable, and want to get better is going to be the key to our success. The energy is very good at practice, with lots of competition, fun and encouragement from each other to each other."

A key will be "continuing to be more consistent in all we do" Guthrie said, "and learning to understand that matches will be won and lost with spares, persistence, perseverance, and maintaining a good attitude."

In the conference, "it sounds like Coloma is the team to beat. We will be in contention, and plan on winning the conference. At least that's the plan and goal," Guthrie said. "I am excited to see how this mixture of young men mesh together and become a team."

Mattawan's basketball team blessed with depth

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Coach Josh Brown's Mattawan basketball team will boast a lot of depth this season.

Last year, the team finished 5-18 overall and 3-5 in the SMAC West and were tied for third in the division and finished sixth out of 10 in the conference. We had 4 guys finish with all conference honors.

"Juniors Liam Walsh and Hayden Campbell were SMAC All Conference, while Senior Caleb Goodrich and junior Ethan Bouma received SMAC Honorable Mention," Brown said. "We were very young last season starting four juniors and having nine juniors on the roster who all got time. We played some of our best basketball at the end of the season almost upsetting Portage Northern in the playoffs.

"Last year was a rebuilding year and we are expecting a big turnaround this season. We finished for the fifth season in a row as a top 5 all academic team in Division 1 with a team GPA of 3.82."

Key graduates from last year include "senior forward Caleb Goodrich who was our lone senior starter and our second best 3-point shooter on the team," Brown said. "We had two other seniors that came off the bench in guard Leyton Kahle and center Peter Drelles. They were great kids that worked hard and helped keep the academic standard of our program."

Key players this season include returning leading scorer 6-foot-2 senior Forward Hayden Campbell.

"Last season he averaged 9 points per game," Brown said. "He should take the next level in scoring and being a more consistent scorer. Our best 3-point shooter is returning 6-3 senior Forward Liam Walsh. Liam averaged 8 points per game while making 52 made 3's while shooting 37 percent from threes. We are looking for him to become a multilevel scorer and build his game.

"The newest addition to the starting lineup will be last year's 6-man, 6-0 senior guard Everett Wherley. Last year coming off the bench Everett averaged 5 points per game while getting to the free-throw line the most on the team (64 attempts). We are looking for him to be one of our go to guys when we need a bucket and looking for him to double his scoring this season. Lastly, we are looking for a big season from our returning 6-5 inch senior Center Ethan Bouma. He is our one guy with true size on the team and looking for him to be a double double guy. Last year averaged 5ppg, 5rpg, 1.5 bpg. We need all four to take the next step for us to be successful."

Brown expects his team to be towards the top in the SMAC which went to one conference and got rid of divisions.

"Returning nine seniors with a lot of experience, we're hoping our depth helps us take the next step," Brown said. "We had a good summer and fall league in Grand Rapids and hoped our depth can overcome our lack of true star power. We host districts and are hoping to play for a championship against a stacked district. Our strength is our depth. We have a lot of guys that will help on both ends of the ball.

"We will be playing 11 guys throughout the season. We are looking to get up and press teams and will try to wear teams out with our press and our amount of bodies that can play. We are a closed knit group that cares about each other and is about team success. I think that has driven us this preseason so far."We need to figure out who we are in close games and who will take the tough shots at the end of close games. Without having a go-to guy we will be a by-committee team that will ride hot hands."

The SMAC is very top heavy. "Kalamazoo Central is a tier above everyone else. They are contenders for a state title. I think we can be in the next tier that consists of Loy Norrix, Portage Central and Portage Northern and possibly Stevensville Lakeshore," Brown said.

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OBITUARIES

Robert John "Tink" Timkovich

Robert John "Tink" Timkovich, 81, of Kalamazoo, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2025, at Bronson Methodist Hospital, Kalamazoo, after a courageous battle with prostate and pancreatic cancer. He was born in Santa Monica, California, on April 29, 1944, the son of the late John and Mary (Dillenbeck) Timkovich.

Robert was a graduate of Loy Norrix High School, where he excelled in wrestling. He retired from Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home after 20-plus years. Robert loved fishing at his home on Huzzy Lake, woodworking, building dune buggies, and hunting at his farm in Lawrence. He loved to plant gardens of vegetables and share with his family and friends.

On April 19, 1968, he married Mary Lou Webb, who survives. They spent 57 years together.

In addition to his wife, Mary Lou, he is also survived by his son, Robert John "Bobber" Timkovich Jr.; one sister, Rose (Randy) Brondyke of Holland; brother-in-law, James Oros of Kalamazoo, many nieces and nephews; special friend, Courtney Gass and many more friends who were like family, there are too many to mention, but you know who you are.

Cremation will take place. In accordance with Robert's wishes, there will be no public services at this time.

Memorial contributions may be directed to West Michigan Cancer Center.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at: adamspawpaw.com

Elsie Kay Pyard

Elsie Kay Pyard, 88, of Paw Paw, passed away Saturday, Nov. 22, 2025, at Bronson Methodist Hospital, Kalamazoo. She was born June 1, 1937, in Cadillac, Michigan, the daughter of Irving Glenn Monroe and Zella (Westerbeck) Beaver.

Elsie loved to volunteer with her local organizations. She participated with the Van Buren County Senior Services and the Paw Paw Christmas in the Village Christmas Tree Auction. Elsie owned her beloved award-winning Corvette for many years and took it to many car shows. Elsie kept all her trophies and medals and was honored to pass it along to her grandson. She had a nurturing spirit and was seen as a "second mom" to many of the children who lived in her neighborhood. Elsie will be deeply missed by her friends and family.

She is survived by her son, Kevin (Kae Capman) Pyard; grandchildren, Justin (Jessica Guillean) Bloomfield, Jacob Hainer, Amanda (Nic) Martinez, Joel Michael Pyard and Josh Pyard; great-grandchildren, Lennyx Bloomfield, Lucas Pyard, Megan Martinez, Collin Martinez, Evelyn Pyard, Gabriel Pyard, Micah Pyard and Levi Pyard; and two sisters, Beverly and Claudia.

Elsie was preceded in passing by her parents and husband, Joseph Pyard in 1973.

Cremation will take place. There will be a celebration of life party for Elsie in the spring of 2026.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at: adamspawpaw.com

Charles Stuart Moses

Charles Stuart Moses, 89, of Lawrence, passed away Sunday, Nov. 30, 2025, at Rose Arbor Hospice Residence, Kalamazoo. He was born March 16, 1936, in Lawrence, the son of Charles Judson and Nina (Johnson) Moses.

Charles was a longtime member of the Lawrence Fire Department, where he served as fire chief from 1990-2000. He also served on the Lawrence Quick Response Team. In addition, he was a member of the Van Buren County Fire Chiefs Association, the Lawrence Jaycees, and the Paw Paw United Methodist Church. In his free time, Charles enjoyed trout fishing, hunting and trapping fox and mink.

On July 2, 1955, Charles married Leah Haney, who survives.

He is also survived by his two daughters, Alice (Gary) Burnside and Teri Sue (Steve) Moses; four grandchildren, Chris (Ann) Tapper, Craig (Megan) Tapper, Glen (Erika) Burnside, Chad (Elleigh) Burnside; along with many great-grandchildren.

Charles was preceded in death by his daughter, Jeri Tapper, four brothers and one sister.

Family and friends are invited to visit Saturday, Dec. 13, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Adams Funeral Home, 502 West Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, where a memorial service will begin at 1 p.m. Charles will be placed to rest at Hill Cemetery, Lawrence, at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Centrica Care Navigators - Rose Arbor Hospice.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at: adamspawpaw.com

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State of Michigan Probate Court
Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
DECEDENT'S ESTATE
CASE NO 2025-1183-DE
212 E. Paw Paw St., Paw Paw, MI 49079 • (269) 657-8225
Estate of VICKIE SMITH, Deceased
DOB: February 25,1949 (2/25/1949)
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **VICKIE SMITH, died August 6,2025 (8/6/2025).**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **SIDNEY SMITH**, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw Street, **811 Port Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
November 25, 2025
Attorney:
W. Brendan Neal P73923
511 Renaissance Drive, Suite 110,
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269)983-5777
Personal representative
Sidney Smith
37 E. Grand Circle Avenue
Battle Creek, MI 49037
(269)380-1903

State of Michigan Probate Court
Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger (P-62867)
212 E. Paw Paw St., Paw Paw, MI 49079 • (269) 657-8225
Estate of JAMES LEMMERS, DEC'D, Deceased
DOB: July 2,1934 (7/2/1934)
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **JAMES LEMMERS, died May 2,2025 (5/2/2025).**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **MARK LEMMERS**, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw Street, **212 E. Paw Paw Street, #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
November 20, 2025
Attorney:
Mathew S. Davidson (P-36003)
P.O.Box 391, 211 Portage Avenue
Three Rivers, Michigan 49093
269-2731685
Personal representative
Mark Lemmers
59579 Ridgewood Dr.
Goshen, IN 46528
574-370-6906

State of Michigan Probate Court
Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
DECEDENT'S ESTATE
CASE NO 2025-1168-DE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger (P-62867)
212 E. Paw Paw St., Paw Paw, MI 49079 • (269) 657-8225
Estate of JUDITH ANN THAR, Deceased
DOB: December 3,1942 (12/03/1942)
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **JUDITH ANN THAR, died February 2,2025 (2/2/2025).**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **:PRO S. HARRIS** personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw Street, **212 E. Paw Paw Street, #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
November 18, 2025
Attorney:
Staci L. Slisbury P79632
9848 Portage Road,
Portage MI 49002
269-256-5960
Personal representative
Lori S. Harris
44261 CR 390
Bloomingdale, MI 49026
269-330-4137

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Mary Dykstra; Atty: Team X; 1st Pub: 12/4/2025; Atty File #: 515603F02; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Marvin D. Dykstra, a married man and Mary L. Dykstra, a married woman husband and wife
Original Mortgagee: Washington Mortgage Company, a Michigan Corporation
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): HSBC Bank USA, National Association as Trustee in Trust for Citigroup Mortgage Loan Trust Inc., asset backed pass through certificates series 2003-HE3
Date of Mortgage: May 14, 1999
Date of Mortgage Recording: May 20, 1999
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $15,037.35
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Almena, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 11, Green Acres, according to the plat thereof as recorded in Liber 7 of Plats, on Page 38 in Van Buren County Records.
Common street address (if any): 39388 Sandyridge Cir, Mattawan, MI 49071-9750
The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: December 4, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1578751
(12-04)(12-25)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Sawyer Stephan Brown; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 11/27/2025; Atty File #: 25-013829; Insurer: GNMA
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Sawyer Stephan Brown, an unmarried man, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Van Dyk Mortgage Corporation., its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated October 8, 2021 and recorded October 21, 2021 in Liber 1727, Page 827 Van Buren County Records, Michigan, and Affidavit Affecting Realty recorded November 21, 2025 in Liber 1786, Page 457 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy-Five and 58/100 Dollars ($108,975.58).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 8, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Village of Bloomingdale, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as:
Commencing at the Northeast corner of Lot 102 of VILLAGE OF BLOOMINGDALE, according to the plat thereof, recorded in Liber 25 of Deeds on Page 10, in the Office for the Register of Deeds for Van Buren County Records; thence South 53 feet; thence West 66 feet; thence North 53 feet; thence East 66 feet to the place of beginning.
210 N Van Buren Street, Bloomingdale, Michigan 49026
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: November 27, 2025
File No. 25-013829
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(11-27)(12-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Chelsea Nichole Selvidge; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 11/27/2025; Atty File #: 25-003295-1; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 49c of the State Housing Development Authority Act of 1966, 1966 PA 346, MCL 125.1449c, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 08, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Chelsea Nichole Selvidge and Joshua Allen Beebe, wife and husband Original Mortgagee: The Huntington National Bank
Date of mortgage: May 21, 2024
Recorded on May 31, 2024, Liber 1766, on Page 422, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Michigan State Housing Development Authority
Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Eighty-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty-Eight and 28/100 Dollars ($189,728.28) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: BEGINNING ON THE CENTER LINE OF MAIN STREET AT A POINT 297 FEET EASTERLY FROM THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SECTION; THENCE NORTH 484.4 FEET; THENCE WEST 40 FEET; THENCE SOUTH TO THE CENTER LINE OF SAID STREET; THENCE EASTERLY TO BEGINNING, EXCEPT MAIN STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY, ALL BEING IN SECTION 16 TOWN 3 SOUTH, RANGE 16 WEST.
Commonly known as 519 W Main Street, Hartford, MI 49057
The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 125.1449v, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 125.1449v(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Michigan State Housing Development Authority Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C.
23938 Research Dr, Suite 300
Farmington Hills, MI 48335
248.539.7400
1578606
(11-27)(12-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Sandra E. McGwin-Kelly; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 11/27/2025; Atty File #: 25-011907; Insurer: (unknown)
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Kevin Jon Kelly and Sandra E. McGwin-Kelly, husband and wife, to Chemical Bank Shoreline, Mortgagee, dated June 18, 2001 and recorded June 25, 2001 in Liber 1334, Page 313 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by CSMC 2021-RPL6 Trust, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Seventy-Eight Thousand Six Hundred Seventy-Seven and 95/100 Dollars ($78,677.95).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 8, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Township of Arlington, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as:
THE NORTH HALF OF THE NORTH HALF OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 4, TOWN 2 SOUTH, RANGE 15 WEST.
26508 52nd St, Bangor, Michigan 49013
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: November 27, 2025
File No. 25-011907
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(11-27)(12-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Lisa Breur; Atty: BETTER CHOICE NOTICE SOLUTIONS - BETTER CHOICE NOTICE SOLUTIONS; 1st Pub: 11/27/2025; Atty File #: 25-29362; Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE Notice of foreclosure by advertisement.
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on January 8, 2026. The amount due on the Mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by Lisa Breur and Timothy Breur to Equity Prime Mortgage LLC dated September 22, 2021 and recorded September 27, 2021 in Liber 1726 at Page 491, Van Buren County, Michigan. Said Mortgage is now held by Freedom Mortgage Corporation by assignment and/or merger. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $169,151.31. Said premises are located in Van Buren County, Michigan and are described as:
The land referred to in this instrument, situated in the Village of Mattawan, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, is described as follows: Lot 9, Block 3, Original Plat of the Village of Mattawan, Van Buren County, Michigan, according to the recorded plat in Liber G of Plats, Page 444, Van Buren County Records. Parcel ID No(s).: 80-46-010-033-00 Said property is commonly known as 24238 Front Ave, Mattawan, MI 49071. The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages, if any, are limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Please be advised that any third party purchaser is responsible for preparing and recording the Sheriff's Deed. If this is a residential Mortgage, the following shall apply: ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. IF YOU: ARE A DEBTOR IN AN ACTIVE BANKRUPTCY CASE; ARE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A BANKRUPTCY STAY; OR, HAVE RECEIVED A DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY AND YOU HAVE NOT REAFFIRMED THE DEBT, THIS NOTICE IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT FROM YOU PERSONALLY. Dated: November 20, 2025 Attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage: Thomas E. McDonald (P39312) Brock & Scott, PLLC 5431 Oleander Drive Wilmington, NC 28403 PHONE: (844) 856-6646 File No. 25-29362
(11-27)(12-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: John F Crawford; Atty: Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. - Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C.; 1st Pub: 11/20/2025; Atty File #: 25MI00779-1; Insurer: (unknown)
FORECLOSURE NOTICE
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, December 18, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by John F. Crawford, a single man to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as Mortgagee, as Nominee for Amerifirst Financial Corporation, its successors, and assigns, Mortgagee, dated September 5, 2019, and recorded on September 20, 2019, in Liber 1689, Page 612, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage dated October 22, 2025 and recorded October 29, 2025 in Liber 1785, Page 493, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Twenty-Nine Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Five and 90/100 ($29,655.90) including interest at the rate of 5.75000% per annum.
Said premises are situated in the Township of HAMILTON, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Lots 34 and 35, Supervisor`s Plat Of Ackley Beach, as recorded in Liber 1, Page 29, Van Buren County Records. Commonly known as: 46800 EAST DR, DECATUR, MI 49045 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 6.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: November 20, 2025 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 25MI00779-1
(11-20)(12-11)

Van Buren; Mtgr: Thomas E Demarest; Atty: Shaheen - Shaheen Jacobs & Ross PC; 1st Pub: 11/13/2025; Atty File #: (N/A); Insurer: (unknown)
FORECLOSURE NOTICE
(Van Buren County) NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County (at the front steps of the Courthouse in Paw Paw, Michigan), starting promptly at 1:00 o'clock P.M. on Thursday, December 18, 2025. Default has been made in the terms and conditions of the mortgage made by Thomas E. Demarest and Crystalle Demarest, husband and wife, as original mortgagors, to The Huntington National Bank, a national banking association, as original mortgagee, dated August 28, 2018, and recorded on September 18, 2018, at the Van Buren County, Michigan Register of Deeds, in Liber 1673, commencing on Page 936. The amount claimed to be due on this mortgage, on the date of this notice, was $380,188.36.
The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
The description of the mortgaged premises is all that certain piece or parcel of land situated in the Township of Paw Paw, in the County of Van Buren and State of Michigan further described as follows: Part of the Northeast fractional 1/4 of fractional section 2, Town 3 South, Range 14 West, described as commencing at the North 1/4 post of said Section 2; thence East along the North line of said Section, 301.01 feet to the point of beginning of the land hereinafter described; thence continuing East along said North line 614.03 feet to the Northwest corner of the plat of Green Meadow Highlands, according to the plat thereof as recorded in Liber 7 of Plats, Page 83 of Van Buren County Records; thence South 00 degrees 36 minutes 17 seconds West, along the East line of said plat and its extension Southerly thereof, 957.59 feet; thence North 89 degrees 28 minutes 10 seconds West, parallel with the South line of the North fractional 1/2 of said Northeast fractional 1/4, 34.00 feet; thence South 00 degrees 36 minutes 17 seconds West, 500.00 feet to said South line; thence North 89 degrees 28 minutes 10 seconds West, along said South line, 80.00 feet; thence North 00 degrees 36 minutes 17 seconds East 500.00 feet; thence North 89 degrees 28 minutes 10 seconds West, parallel with the South line of the North fractional 1/2 of said Northeast fractional 1/4, 434.00 feet; thence South 00 degrees 36 minutes 17 seconds West, 500.00 feet to said South line, thence North 89 degrees 28 minutes 10 seconds West, along said South line, 66.00 feet; thence North 00 degrees 36 minutes 17 seconds East, 1451.90 feet to the place of beginning.
Commonly known as: 36862 49th Ave., Paw Paw, MI The redemption period shall be Six (6) months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be thirty (30) days from the date of such sale or when the time to provide the notice required by MCLA 600.3241a(c) expires, whichever is later or unless the redemption period is shortened in accordance with MCLA 600.3238.
If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, under MCLA 600.3278, the
borrower and mortgagor will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Attention Purchasers: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Shaheen, Jacobs & Ross, P.C. is a debt collector attempting to collect this debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. Dated: November 6, 2025 The Huntington National Bank, a national banking association Mortgagee SHAHEEN, JACOBS & ROSS, P.C. By: Michael J. Thomas, Esq. Attorneys for Mortgagee 615 Griswold Street, Suite 1425 Detroit, Michigan 48226-3993 (313) 963-1301
(11-13)(12-04)

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Notice is hereby given that The Shed Self Storage, phone (269) 200-2156, located at 72819 M 40, Lawton, MI, 49065 will hold a Public Sale, to satisfy the lien of the owner. This notice is given in accordance with the provisions of Michigan Compiled Statutes 570.521 to 570.527. Units will be sold via online auction, at www.LockerFox.com. Auction will close on or after Wednesday December 24, 2025 at 10:00 am.
The personal goods stored therein by the following may include, but are not limited to household goods, furniture, tools, equipment, toys, boxes, clothes and misc items. Owner reserves the right to bid and the right to refuse bids. Cleanup deposit is required. Sale is subject to cancellation. The contents of the rental storage units belonging to the following persons will be sold:
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554 Williams gets go ahead from ZBA

By James Windell

Cindi Compton, the owner of the property at 554 Williams Street, left the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) meeting on Monday, November 24, 2025 with a smile on her face.

And why not? The ZBA had just given approval for her final requested variance on her unusual property.

"Per the ZBA's request for more information at the September. 22, 2025 meeting, we submitted detailed drawings showing the height of the structures and topographical elevations at the four main corners of the building, as well as the elevation of the top and bottom of the unusual terrain bordering Williams and Dyckman," Compton said after the meeting. "We are very excited about the approval."

Compton appeared first before the ZBA at that September meeting asking for five variances so she could proceed with her plans to build three attached single-family condominiums. However, the unique shape and contours of her property made it difficult.

The property is unique because it is so situated that it has three front yards on Williams Street, Dyckman Ave., and Broadway Ave. It also has about a 10-foot elevation change from the Broadway Street front to the Williams Street front.

Compton applied for dimensional zoning variances under Section 2404 of the South Haven Zoning Ordinance and sought relief from Section 703 – Central Business District (CBD) Dimensional Standards, specifically in regard to a front yard setback, a side yard setback, and the height ordinance, as well as Section 2112 – Swimming Pools. The property, which is approximately one-third of an acre, is presently vacant and contains no structures.

While the ZBA approved some of her requested variances, they delayed ruling on the height variance. Compton originally requested that she be allowed an overall height of the building to go to 55 feet (a variance of 10 feet) in order to accommodate the mechanical equipment and storage space for an elevator. She said at that meeting that after working with engineering and architectural consultants to develop site plans, it might not be possible to stay within the 45 feet maximum height limit.

After considerable discussion, the ZBA decided to postpone the decision about allowing a height variance until Compton could supply more definitive information as to the actual height needed. The ZBA voted to grant her an extension to come back with more information about the height needed.

She came to the November 24 meeting following further work with project designers to refine the design. She asked for a 3.75 foot variance from the maximum permitted height of 45 feet. She stated that her proposed building height is 48.75 feet when measured from average grade. After discussion, the ZBA voted to approve the variance.

Asked about the next step in the project, Compton replied: "We need to submit an application to the Planning Commission for a special use permit and site plan approval," she said. "The NEWCO team is currently working on the engineering, more detailed drawings, and the various reviews required as part of that process. We hope to secure those approvals by early spring so the working drawings can be completed and put out to bid."

She added that her goal is to break ground in the fall of 2026. "We hope to have the majority of the project completed before the 2027 summer season," she said. "As with any construction project, though, the schedule will be dependent on weather and supply chain conditions."

Cogdal Winery wins gold medal

By James Windell

Winning a Gold Medal for his Cabernet Franc is important, but Cogdal Vineyards owner Jack Murdoch says that's not why he makes wine.

"I'm more interested in making a wine that my customers like," he says.

One of the wines his customers enjoy is Cabernet Franc, though. "That's one of the wines we are known for," he said in a recent interview. "That and our Dry Riesling. But winning a Gold Medal says we are doing the right thing."

Although Cogdal Vineyards, owned by Murdoch and his wife Deb, has only been around since about 2008, they have never won a Gold Medal previously.

"It may get people to try our Cabernet Franc, but they have to like it," he says. "It's only moderately important how raters in a competition judge you."

The Gold Medal was won at the 2025 Taste Michigan Governor's Cup wine competition held in May, 2025, with blind tastings conducted by the Beverage Testing Institute in Chicago. The official awards ceremony took place on November 11, 2025, at the 18th Annual Grand Rapids International Wine, Beer, and Food Festival in Grand Rapids where Mudoch accepted the Gold Medal.

The vineyard was established in 2008 by Jack and Deb Murdoch on the original plot of land owned by Jack's grandfather, Harry Cogdal. Harry re-located (literally moved a portion of his family's house), after an initial attempt to farm on Lake Michigan on the west side of Blue Star. Since then, the property has been in continuous agricultural operation and has undergone an evolution through time. The property has hosted fruit trees, vegetable crops, Christmas trees, asparagus, a nursery, and now a vineyard. Cogdal Vineyards is situated less than one-half mile from Lake Michigan. The closeness to the lake helps regulate temperatures that promote healthy vines and superior grapes.

The Murdochs currently have nine acres of multiple varieties of vines in the ground producing grapes for wine production. Jack Murdoch says that's near the limit of what they can handle.

"We do most of the work ourselves," he says referring to he and his wife. "But I do hire a crew for some things, like trimming in the spring and picking in the fall. Throughout the year the daily management is what we do."

Although the vineyards and its tasting room are busy in the summer months, things slow down in the fall and winter. The season will end after the weekend of December 6 and 7 when they hold their Nouveau Fest.

"The idea of a nouveau fest was started in France quite a while ago," he explains, "because the fall is kind of a slow time. They decided to come up with a new way to sell more wine. So, a nouveau fest features wine that's been grown, picked, fermented, and sold in the same year."

He says that typically a vineyard lets a wine settle, and then they wait to sell it. "But a nouveau wine is fresh; it's a brand new wine," he says. "The grapes were picked eight weeks ago for the ones I'm going to do. Then we ferment it and we will sell it at the Nouveau Fest. That's what we are celebrating this weekend."

After Nouveau Fest, Cogdal Vineyards will be closed until Valentine's Day in February, 2026. "My wife and I use that time for our break," Murdoch says, "because during the summer we don't get a break."

The Nouveau Fest is open from noon to 5:00 pm on Saturday, December 7, and Sunday, December 8. The vineyards is located at 7143 107th Ave., South Haven. For more information, visit the Cogdal Vineyards webste at www.cogdalvineyards.com

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